:Hurault--174 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

CHAPTER VI

FAMILY CUSTOM

17
105 The family custom of the Refugee Blacks presents more unity than their beliefs. Contrary to the Blacks of Brazil and Haiti, among whom the influences of Dahomey and the Yoruba country have dominated, the Refugee Blacks of Guiana have borrowed the essential part of their family custom from the Agni-Ashanti culture area. One finds again especially such characteristic traits as the prohibition of inheritance of widows, customs relating to birth, isolation of the dead in cemeteries away from habitations.

But on several essential points:

--The marriage system.

--Institutions relative to death and mourning, and the central place given to them in the whole body of customary institutions.

The Refugee Blacks have separated themselves cleanly from the conceptions of their ancestors, and the conceptions they have elaborated may be in large measure considered as an original creation.

Birth

843

Beliefs. As soon as a woman is pregnant, her husband is subject to special obligations. He may not use a shovel nor drive nails. These operations which, among the Refugee Blacks, have as their primary purpose the digging of graves and the making of coffins, might be supposed to make the child die. Neither he nor his wife may cut their hair; he is subject to food interdictions, especially the maïpouri (tapir).